

Remarks

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. Claims 1-2, 5-7, 11, 14-15, and 17-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gariepy et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,900,960). Claims 3-4, 8-10, 12-13, 16, and 19-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gariepy et al. in view of Mizukami et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,598,385). The invention is believed to be patentable.

The invention relates to an automated library system. Existing automated library systems are dedicated to either random access of the individual media or serial access of individual media presented in supersets of media. The invention addresses this situation by providing an improved automated storage system that receives, uses, manages, creates, and modifies supersets of media in addition to the management and use of individual media in the same system, wherein any individual media located in a superset or stored individually remains accessible and supersets can be accessed as one piece of media.

Claim 1 recites an automated storage system comprising a media storage facility, at least one mechanism for accessing individual media, and at least one mechanism for accessing supersets of media. The media storage facility includes a plurality of individual medium slots. Each individual medium slot is for storing an individual medium. The media storage facility further includes a plurality of superset slots. Each superset slot is for storing a superset of media.

Claim 1 specifically recites that the media storage facility is configured such that any individual media located in a superset remain accessible on an individual basis in addition to being accessible as part of the superset where it is located. Gariepy fails to describe or suggest this specific feature in combination with the other recited limitations.

Gariepy discusses having magazines in a library, and a transporter attached to a robot arm that can receive two or more cartridges. The process is to move the transporter

through the library filling it with individual pieces of media from one or more magazines, and then moving the transporter to the drive area and pushing the individual pieces of media into individual drives. Nevertheless, there is no suggestion of the claimed combination wherein any individual media located in a superset remain accessible on an individual basis in addition to being accessible as part of the superset where it is located. Although Gariepy does describe moving the transporter through the library and filling it with individual pieces of media, there is no suggestion of the claimed combination including the additional feature of being able to access the individual medium as part of the superset where it is located in addition to being able to access the medium on an individual basis.

The Examiner makes reference to Gariepy, col. 5, ll. 1-42. This passage of Gariepy describes the transporter, including a number of transport receivers for transporting cartridges between the storage rack and the tape drive. As explained above, Gariepy has a serious deficiency when it comes to the claimed invention.

Regarding claim 2, this claim recites that supersets can be reorganized, emptied, or created based on a list of individual media present in the media storage library. Gariepy only describes building a library system with different numbers and cartridges in a magazine and different numbers of magazines in a rack, but does not teach moving media around in the library in order to dynamically create new organizations as recited by claim 2.

Regarding claims 5-7 and 11, these dependent claims recite various aspects of intermediate supersets and are believed to recite further patentable subject matter. The Examiner makes a general reference to col. 3, ll. 28-54 of Gariepy. This passage does describe cartridges, magazines, and racks but fails to suggest the specifically recited features in these dependent claims.

Claims 14-15 recite an automated storage system including an automated storage library and are believed to be patentable for reasons given above. Claims 17-18 recite an

automated storage system including a shelf system and are believed to be patentable for reasons given above.


The remaining claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). The secondary reference, Mizukami, fails to overcome the deficiency of the primary reference. Dependent claims 3-4, 8-10, 12-13, 16, and 19-20 are believed to be patentable for reasons given above.

Mizukami describes a media library system and media management scheme. As described in the Abstract, storage cells of the store house are divided into at least two groups and arranged in an order of average distances with respect to the media driving unit. At least one vacant cell not storing any recording medium is secured among the storage cells of the first group after the media exchange operation is completed. The idea here is to improve media management by shortening the average moving distance the media is carried. Mizukami does describe a media management scheme but this does not overcome the deficiency of the primary reference, let alone suggest the claimed combinations.

For reasons given above, claims 1-20 are believed to be patentable and allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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